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## NESTING AIDS FOR WILD BEES

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Many nesting aids for wild bees available on the market are unsuitable due to the materials used. These include for example softwoods, pine cones, sawdust and broken reed stalks as well as unsealed perforated bricks.

Structural defects, due to unclean work on the boreholes and holes that are too close together, are further sources of error.

It is also important to ensure that the nesting aids are weatherproof or roofed and that they are kept in a stable position. The nesting aids should not swing in the wind or be easily accessible to predators.

Since most wild bee species nest in the ground - in so called open ground areas - demolition edges and sand, it is important to create and keep such structures.

This is often difficult in urban areas. Therefore, it is important to offer nesting aids made of wood or nesting tubes made of cardboard and reeds of nature, especially to the overground species.

The most important tips for building nesting aids are summarized on the back page.

Once this has been done, it is important to take a look at the ecosystem of wild bee habitat. Are there rough pastures/wildflower meadows nearby? Are there flowers and perennials close by that have unfilled blossoms? Is there sand and clay in the surrounding area?

You can find more information about wild bees here:

<https://www.wildbee.ch/>

<https://igwildebiene.ch/>

<http://www.wildbienen.de/leben/naturgarten/13708.html>

<https://www.wildbiene.org/>

<https://www.bund.net/themen/tiere-pflanzen/wildbienen/wildbienenkunde/>

<https://baden-wuerttemberg.nabu.de/umwelt-und-leben/umweltbewusst-leben/naturgarten/13708.html>

<https://www.grueneliga-berlin.de/richtig-gaertnern-fuer-wildbienen-was-schuetzt-was-schadet/>



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# IMPORTANT FACTS FOR BUILDING NESTING AIDS

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## 1. Selecting the right Wood:

- use hardwoods (e.g. ash, cherry, oak, robinia, etc.) as they are more weather resistant and less likely to warp
- it should already be matured and dried to avoid cracking and mold formation later on
- pay attention to the diameter depending on the chosen drill length (2 - 8 mm)
- reed and nest tubes can be ordered online or made by yourself

## 2. Good Tools:

- it is important to use a fresh set of wood drills so that there are no splinters left in the holes for the insects to tear their wings
- a countersink bit to remove splinters from the drill holes/entrances
- sandpaper to remove the last splinters

## 3. The Art of Drilling:

- the holes should be drilled at a small, upward slanting angle (about 5 degrees) to protect the brood from any water intrusion that may occur
- be careful not to put too much pressure. Especially with the small drills, as they will break off quickly
- always use the full length of the drill up to the maximum and also use small drills.
- the drill should not come out on the back side / the nest tube must be closed on the back side
- do not set the holes too close to each other (1-1.5 cm) to avoid collision of the drill tunnels

## 4. Protective Measures:

- think about the final installation before drilling
- options: eyelets or hooks, fix on wood, walling in with clay or similar
- provide a small roof if the nesting aid cannot be placed under a roof
- if the nesting aid is fixed with a string, it should not be able to swing
- think about a protection, if there are climbing possibilities for potential predators nearby the nesting aid

## 5. Business before Pleasure:

- place the nesting aid in the most sunny position possible
- using a soldering iron or waterproof pencil to put a name on the nesting aid
- write numbers or letters on the holes and invent a game to get the children's attention
- take pictures and show them to friends
- observe which species move in
- keeping an eye on the relationship triangle nesting/food/building material

